



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE ARRESTS 44 ALIENS FROM 3 PITTSBURGH PATROL STOPS *State troopers, local police instrumental in stopping flow of illegal aliens in unsafe vehicles*

PITTSBURGH-- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents arrested 44 illegal aliens following three separate Pennsylvania State Police traffic stops near here over the weekend.

This makes 145 illegal alien arrested stemming from trooper and police stops since March 1.

In March, ICE responded 16 times in support of the state police and the arrest of 98 illegal aliens, and three times in support of local police and the arrest of three illegal aliens.

Friday's arrests were by troopers operating out of the Franklin, Pa. state police barracks, and Saturday and Sunday's arrests were by troopers operating out of the New Stanton, Pa. barracks.

The first arrests of April came Friday in Franklin, Pa. when troopers conducted a traffic stop during which eight illegal aliens were identified. ICE special agents responded and took those aliens into custody.

The second arrests occurred Saturday when a trooper stopped a Chevy Suburban for speeding. The trooper found that the driver, identified as Julian Morales Perez, was operating the truck despite its registration having been suspended. Perez is a citizen of Guatemala.

Inside the vehicle were 16 other people, all of whom are suspected of being illegal aliens. The trooper, in attempting to identify the vehicle's occupants, contacted ICE's Law Enforcement Support Center (LESC) and the center placed detainers on them.

ICE agents responded to the scene, interviewed the vehicle occupants, conducted criminal background checks on them through the LESC, and determined that all illegally entered the United States without inspection. All were transported to the Allegheny County Jail to be detained until they could be processed.

New Stanton is a significant interstate traffic area just east of Pittsburgh where Interstates 70 and 76 merge along with State routes 66 and 119.

"The Pennsylvania State Police and the local police departments have been instrumental in identifying large groups of illegal aliens transiting the corridor in unsafe vehicles, in vehicles being improperly operated, or in vehicles operated by unqualified and uninsured drivers," said ICE Resident Agent-in-Charge Rich Boronyak, who leads ICE investigative efforts in Pittsburgh. "We greatly appreciate anything the troopers and officers can do to save lives."

The third group of arrests occurred Sunday when a trooper observed a white van being driven erratically. After stopping the vehicle, the trooper determined the driver, Mexico citizen Armando Lagunas-Suazo, is not licensed to drive. The trooper found that there were 18 other occupants in the vehicle. The trooper, in attempting to identify the occupants, contacted the ICE LESC and the center placed detainees on all 19 aliens.

ICE agents responded to the scene, interviewed the vehicle occupants, conducted criminal background checks on them through the LESC, and determined that all illegally entered the United States without inspection. All were transported to the Allegheny County Jail to be detained until they could be processed.

Those aliens arrested Friday, Saturday and Sunday from these incidents --those not criminally charged, not criminal aliens, and not threats to public safety or national security-- will be issued lawful Notices to Appear (NTAs). An NTA enters an alien into immigration court proceedings and the alien is notified of their exact court date by the Executive Office of Immigration Review.

If an alien fails to appear for a scheduled immigration hearing, law permits an immigration judge to issue a deportation order in absentia. In such a case, a fugitive warrant is obtained on the alien and they are listed as a fugitive absconder, a priority for arrest by ICE's fugitive operations units. The alien's name is also added to the National Crime Information Center database to alert all law enforcement personnel that the alien is a fugitive subject to immediate arrest. Fugitive absconders who are arrested are required under law to be detained until deported.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.